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# Iowa Coaches

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## Iowa Coaches

From the first far outpost of State University of Iowa football to the historic Rose Bowl in California, where the Hawkeyes made their great stand of January 1, 1957, three milestones stand bold and clear. They are the indestructible imprints left on more than six decades of football history by three coaches who led their men far beyond the limits of what had been the modest lot of the average Hawkeye team.

These three coaches were eras apart. One man worked with a surprisingly small, fast-moving team in the days of the mass attack, as the Spanish-American War faded out. Another, building almost in the shadow of World War I, brought out a championship team in the early 1920's. The third, over three decades later, built the surprise array of 1956 which well may have been the most dramatic outfit ever to wear the Black and Gold. So to Arthur A. Knipe of 1899 and 1900, to Howard Harding Jones of 1921 and 1922, and to Forest Evashevski of 1956, go the all-time coaching laurels in football at the State University of Iowa.

### *Arthur A. Knipe*

Arthur Knipe was an All-American halfback at



the University of Pennsylvania in 1894. He came to Iowa in 1898 as the third paid coach in the history of the school. His predecessors, A. E. Bull and T. Wagonhurst, each had served one year.

Knipe brought something new to Iowa. He introduced the guards and tackles behind the line, as added stalwarts in the interference. "Tackles back" and "guards back" were famous plays in their days. "The wedge," it was called.

His first team, in 1898, won only three games. But in 1899 and 1900 his Hawkeyes won 15, lost none, and tied two. When his famous 1901 captain, Clyde Williams, was protested and ruled ineligible in 1901, Knipe's entry lost three of nine games and he moved along.

In a day when bone and muscle and brawn in vast quantities powered "the wedge" and "the tackles back" and the crunching play of football in its early days, Knipe came up with a team that averaged a shade under 180 pounds. Yet he went undefeated in 1899, held Iowa's opponents to five points in nine games, and his team kept its goal line uncrossed all season.

There was no particular championship for it to claim, however, since it antedated Iowa's entry into the Western Conference. The Hawkeyes were to make their first appearance in that renowned organization in 1900 when, fortunately, many of the stars of the 1899 team were still available to Coach Knipe.



As a Western Conference entry, Coach Knipe's team kept right on rolling. Its victims in the league included Michigan and Chicago, the Maroons of that era being regarded as something like the last word in football. Only a tie with Northwestern marred the record of the 1900 team, which shared the Conference championship on its first try for the title.

For those tempted to dismiss the achievements of Arthur Knipe's teams of long ago, the suggestion is: Don't. His unbeaten outfits of 1899 and 1900 outscored their opponents 532 to 17 in two seasons. At one stage his teams went through 23 successive games without defeat, although three ties were interspersed.

*Howard Harding Jones*

Howard Jones, a star at Yale in his undergraduate days, came to Iowa in 1916. He was the first coach to remain as long as eight years in command of football. Seven-game seasons appear to have been the rule rather than the exception during Jones's day, since five of his eight teams were limited to seven games. His first year brought a 4-3 record and his second a 3-5 mark.

By 1918, with World War I at its height until mid-November, Jones's teams were on the rise. That entry won six out of eight and his 1919 and 1920 teams won five out of seven, setting the stage for 1921 and 1922, the peak of the Jones era. The Hawkeyes rolled right from scratch.



After a romp against Knox College, Iowa stopped the rampages of Notre Dame which, under Knute Rockne, was blazing through a 20-game winning streak. Five Conference opponents were vanquished in succeeding games, and Howard Jones had Iowa's first Western Conference champion since the Arthur Knipe era. Jones's team was unbeaten and untied. The term "National Champion" was associated with it, although there was no official national title.

Jones produced another powerhouse team in 1922. Its first big accomplishment was a successful meeting with Yale, Alma Mater of Howard Jones, which was coached by his brother, T. A. D. Jones. The meeting of the brothers on opposite sides of the field, with Iowa winning 6-0, was one of the memorable incidents of football in the early 1920's.

The 1922 Iowa team, like the 1921 entry, was unbeaten and untied. It shared the Western Conference championship with Michigan. It helped extend a winning streak of 20 straight games which started against Northwestern in 1920 and ended against Illinois in 1923 — the longest Iowa victory string on record.

Howard Jones, like Knipe before him, built two straight undefeated teams. No other Iowa coach has matched that record. Jones ended his days at Iowa in 1923, moving on to Trinity in North Carolina, now more widely known as Duke Uni-



versity. His last stand was at Southern California.

But how does one measure coaching achievement when the eras are so widely separated, the play so contrasting, the whole football fabric so different? Only by comparative performances, as far as we can tell.

*Forest Evashevski*

So once more Arthur Knipe, Howard Jones and Forest Evashevski stand side by side. Knipe and Jones developed unbeaten teams twice in a row. Evashevski, still at the Hawkeye helm and building prestige as he goes, has had no undefeated team to date. But he, like his two most illustrious predecessors, has built a champion. His Conference title was undisputed, and when he followed by producing the first Rose Bowl winner in the history of Iowa, he performed a feat that probably stands unchallenged in Hawkeye annals. Moreover, his dramatic outfit was not tagged in advance as a likely leader; it was just another entry in the rugged Big Ten race. Because of this, its monumental achievement was all the more noteworthy.

It seems essential here to mention these significant items: In eight seasons at Iowa, Howard Jones sent his teams into 33 Conference games. Forest Evashevski, who was to succeed him nearly 30 years later, has sent his teams into 32 Conference games in only five seasons. Knipe,



heading the Hawkeyes on their first entry into the Conference, had league opponents only six times. Evashevski simply cannot follow the same trail when nine-game schedules are commonplace today and seven-game Conference cards are quite ordinary.

Iowa, through the years, has had 17 coaches. Only two of them have won more Conference games than they have lost. Jones was the first (21-12), Evashevski is the other. The incomplete string of the present Iowa coach stands at 16-15-1, with reasonably good prospects of extending the victory margin. Evashevski, taking command at Iowa in 1952 when preceding teams had won only five games out of 18 in two seasons, made his presence known in the Big Ten from the start. Although his success was modest at the outset, his 1952 unit beat Ohio State in a sensational upset. By 1953 he had a team that was ranked ninth in the nation.

Resourceful and unpredictable, Evashevski's varied tactics have kept opponents guessing as he has strengthened the Hawkeye bulwarks. He stands at the front with Howard Jones and Arthur Knipe as the only coaches to bring championships to Iowa in more than 60 years. There is no attempt here to rate the three.

*Dr. Edward N. Anderson*

If Evashevski's 1956 team was not the most spectacular (not necessarily the most successful)



ever to represent Iowa, then the citation may belong to Dr. Edward N. Anderson's "Ironmen" of 1939. The Ironmen, like Evashevski's 1956 team, featured surprise. They came in when Iowa's stature was hardly discernible on the football horizon. The Hawks had won only two games in the preceding seasons. Hawkeye supporters were virtually without hope.

Dr. Anderson came to Iowa from a successful stand at Holy Cross College. His Iowa team won its first Conference game, a 32-29 breath-taker against Indiana, then yielded to Michigan by a sizeable margin. There was no hint of things to come.

But they came in a blaze. The Hawks, deemed hardly worthy of mention by those evaluating the better teams, sailed past Wisconsin, Purdue, Notre Dame, and Minnesota in that order. In every case the startling Hawks left shock in their wake with the unexpectedness of their advance. Only Northwestern stood between Iowa and the Big Ten championship. That game was a struggle to exhaustion and it went without a decision. The 7-7 tie dropped Iowa to second place to leave a tinge of disappointment in a season that established Iowa as the Cinderella of the football world.

In the percentage of Conference games won for Iowa, Dr. Anderson's teams stand third on the all-time list, winning 22, losing 23, with one



game a tie. His over-all record also is one of the best, at 35-33-2 for eight seasons.

*Jesse Hawley*

Over the long haul the Conference games are the toughest, serving as a yardstick for measuring the records of Iowa's coaches. Jesse Hawley, a Dartmouth man who headed Iowa football from 1910 through 1915, had an all-time record of 24 victories and 18 defeats. His teams, however, played only 19 Conference games in six seasons. whereas Evashevski's teams played 32 in five seasons.

*Burt Ingwerson*

Burt Ingwerson, during an eight-year coaching career at Iowa, had memorable as well as dull stretches. He owns one of the better percentage records with 33 victories, 27 defeats, and 4 ties in eight seasons, although in Conference play his teams won only 11 while losing 20 and playing 4 ties. He was head coach at the time Iowa was dropped from the Conference in 1929, and had to arrange a schedule which included only one Conference game, a contest with Purdue hurriedly arranged when the Conference reinstated Iowa to membership. Iowa's suspension shattered morale and talent to a point where the team made only one touchdown in 1931 and was outscored 131-7.

*John G. Chalmers*

Any list of Iowa's leading coaches must include the name of John G. Chalmers, an Iowa



man himself, who coached the Hawks through three seasons from 1903 to 1905. He had captained Coach Knipe's great 1900 team. Under Chalmers the Iowa teams played lengthy schedules—11 games each during two seasons and 10 the other. They won 24 and lost only 8. They played only seven Western Conference rivals in the three seasons, however, and won only once.

The glittering years have been widely separated in Iowa football. The Hawkeye record will not favorably match the records of some of its Western Conference rivals over the years, although in general the type of football has been representative of Conference standards.

There were days when no light shone at all, such as the sad day at Michigan, back in 1902, when the Wolverines launched an attack so savage that it never has been matched for intensity. The collapse of Iowa was complete as they lost 107-0. That same ill-fated team lost to Illinois 80-0. S. W. Hobbs was coach.

#### *Other Iowa Coaches*

Others who headed the Iowa football staff more than one season were Marc Catlin, 1906-08; Oscar M. Solem, 1932-36; Irl Tubbs, 1937-38; Edward P. (Slip) Madigan, 1943-44; and Leonard Raffensperger, 1950-51. Catlin's teams won seven of 17 games, including one Western Conference game. Solem took command during one of the deepest lulls ever experienced in football by the



University. The last team to represent Iowa before he came scored only one touchdown in eight games. After a 1-7-0 record his first year, however, Solem's Hawkeyes beat Northwestern, Wisconsin, and Purdue of the Conference on their way to a 5-3-0 season. During the next three seasons his teams virtually broke even. When Solem departed from Iowa its emissaries sought out Irl Tubbs from a Florida post. He came in 1937 and won two games in two seasons.

At the height of World War II, with Iowa struggling valiantly to maintain its athletic program in the shadow of the strongly-manned service teams at the Iowa Pre-Flight School, which used some of the same facilities, Head Coach Edward N. Anderson went to war.

Iowa brought in Edward P. (Slip) Madigan, whose colorful "Gallopings Gaels" at St. Mary's College in California had been famous. Except for the youngsters still shy of military age, Madigan's forces were meager. In two seasons his teams beat Nebraska twice and tied Indiana.

Leonard Raffensperger, an Iowa lineman in his playing days, followed Dr. Edward Anderson as head coach in 1950, and his regime was unique in that his teams never met defeat at the hands of Notre Dame or Minnesota, two of Iowa's great rivals. His two-season record was 5-10-3.

BERT McGRANE